A Hundred Years Ago

An Up-to-date Old Folk's Concert in the Form of a Farce in Two Acts

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This play has been prepared for the purpose of meeting a demand for an Old Folks' Concert containing the old favorites, such as, "Auld Lang Syne," "The Old Song," "Annie Laurie," "Billie Boy," "Robin Adair," "Comin' Thro' The Rye," "Juanita," "Dost Thou Love Me, Sister Ruth?," "I Cannot Sing The Old Songs" with parody, "The Old Oaken Bucket," "Love's Old Sweet Song," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "You Can't Have Any Of My Peanuts," "There's Music In The Air," etc., etc., etc. The music is easy and within the ability of all persons able to sing ordinary church music or Gospel songs. The music is sung from the book and need not be committed to memory and consists of thirty-five of the most beautiful of the old songs. The dialog, likewise, may be read from the book, so that this play may be prepared in from one to two weeks' time. A few rehearsals, of course, will be necessary.

The dialog is intensely humorous, with a broad smile and a laugh in every paragraph and has been especially prepared for church choirs and Y. P. societies. It is just clean, crisp, pure fun from beginning to end, and the music will delight both the old and the young. The songs are such as have been tried by fire and have stood the test. There are solos, duets, choruses, also quartets for voices of women and quartets for voices of men. There is probably more music than most people will care for, in which case any number of songs may be omitted. In this way, the entertainment may be cut to fit into any time that may be allotted for the same. The costumes may be made as inexpensively or as elaborately as may be desired. The professor, Herr Glockenspiel Fitzbooble, is a German, who speaks the English language with a very pronounced accent, which causes many very comic situations.

The work contains a number of parodies, the following being a fair sample of the same:

"I CANNOT SING THE OLD SONGS."

I cannot sing the old songs,
I cannot sing the new;
The truth is I can't sing at all—
Not since my whiskers grew.
Some say I ought to oil my voice
Or give it chloroform.

I cannot sing the old songs,
I cannot sing the new;
I cannot sing at all, folks—
Not since my whiskers grew.

Congregations, Aid societies, Y. P. Societies, Building Societies, etc., need look no further for a suitable entertainment. We cannot recommend this entertainment too highly. **WRITE NOW.**

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JERUSHA:—He talked it over with the Committee on Arrangements.

WIDOW WISE [*war-like*]:—Well, I never!

[*While she is speaking, Eleazer Osborne and Lugubrious Blue enter.*

LUGUBRIOUS [*in a melancholy tone—drawling*]:—Good evenin', friends.

WIDOW WISE [*severely*]:—Look here, Eleazer Osborne, you're on the Committee on Program, what's this about Squire Durnitt's hirin' a Dutchman to lead the singin'?

ELEAZER [*fingering his hat sheepishly*]:—Well, bein' Town Clerk, I couldn't oppose Squire Durnitt. He's chairman of the Committee on 'Rangements, 'long with Dr. Quick and Saray Screecher.

[*As Eleazer mentions her name, Sarah Screecher enters, followed by Uri Nuther.*]

WIDOW WISE:—Saray Screecher, what's this about Heer Glockenspiel Fitznoodle?

SARAH [*tossing her head in the air, beligerantly*]:—It's Fitzbooble, if you please. He was my music teacher at the Misses Spriggin's Feemale Seminary, and he's just as nice as he can be.

WIDOW WISE:—Oh, he is, is he? Maybe you're settin' your cap for him.

SARAH [*spitefully*]:—Maybe I ain't had so much experience settin' my cap as you have.

[*All the men, seeing the strained relations, cough or clear their throats in chorus.*]

HIRAM [*loudly*]:—I heard of a new way to tell if a feller loves a girl, and who he is.

[*All the girls rush from left to Hiram, who now stands center of stage, forming an interested group on each side of him. Sarah is on his right, and Widow Wise on his left. All the men join the group, standing back, up stage, somewhat, from the girls.*]

ALL THE GIRLS [*in unison*]:—Goodness gracious, what is it?

HIRAM:—Well, ...

[*All become quiet and eager for the disclosure of the secret.*]

You take four or five chestnuts—[*he pauses.*]

ALL THE GIRLS [*in unison, eagerly*]:—Yes, what then?

HIRAM:—You name the chestnuts after fellers, and put 'em on the stove, and the first one that pops is the one that's to marry you.

HENRIETTA:—Shaw! I know a better way.

WIDOW WISE:—Well, what is it?

HENRIETTA:—Well, you take a particular man, and set him on the sofy in the parlor, with the light turned down.

MERCY [*eagerly*]:—Yes, what then?

HENRIETTA [*soulfully*]:—Why, you sit close to him, and look into his eyes, and then,—if he doesn't pop: its time to change the man on the sofy.

[*Hiram slips quickly to right door, and is looking off.*]

WIDOW WISE [*recognizing that she is sold*]:—How ridiculous!

LUGUBRIOUS [*like a loud and solemn wail*]:—I don't approve of such frivolity, for an old folks' concert-practice. I tell you, the risin' generation—[*interrupted.*]

HIRAM [*at door, loudly*]:—Here comes Squire Durnitt, and somebody with him.

SARAH [*clapping her hands, soulfully*]:—It's Herr Glockenspiel Fitzbooble; I feel it.

[*The entire company is thrown into excitement and confusion. The girls all rush left to get a parting look at the looking-glass. The men nurse their whiskers, and straighten their ties, and gather in a bunch, left of center, as if constituting themselves a reception committee.*]

ELEAZER [*clapping his hands for attention. He is at center of stage*]:—Attention! . . .

[*All become quiet, facing Eleazer.*]

As we all know, Squire Durnitt is our leading citizen, and chairman of the Town Board.

LUGUBRIOUS [*loudly*]:—He ain't the *oldest* citizen, and he won't git 'lected ag'in.

ELEAZER:—He's an upright prohibitionist, and prohibition goes in our village.

LUGUBRIOUS [*shaking his head*]:—Yes, but he oughtn't to exasperate people.

ELEAZER [*wonderingly*]:—Exasperate people?

LUGUBRIOUS:—By keepin' several jugs standin' 'round, when they ain't nothin' in 'em but maple syrup.

[*Enter, with much dignity and state, Squire Durnitt, right door. Pausing just inside the door, with a low bow and a wave of his hand to Herr Glockenspiel Fitzbooble, he bids the latter enter. Enter Fitzbooble, he makes an elaborate, low bow to the company assembled on the stage.*]

SQUIRE [*turning to the company, with grandiloquent utterance*]:—Fellow citizens, ladies and gentlemen: As chairman of the Committee on Arrangements, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you Herr Glockenspiel Fitzbooble, who will assist us in this, our last rehearsal of the Old Folks' Concert.

[*Fitzbooble bows low, and the women courtesy—Widow Wise and Sarah Screecher bumping into each other, back to back, in so doing.*]

[*Fitzbooble speaks with a German accent in broken English throughout.*]

FITZBOOBLE:—I'm b(p)leased to meet you all in bunches.

SQUIRE D. [*graciously*]:—Ah, Herr Glockenspiel, I will present you to all our people individually.

[*All on the stage form in line, from left of stage to center, ready to be presented, in the following order: Widow Wise, and Sarah Screecher; Mercy Toomy, Jerusha Jane Cooley, Henrietta Homleigh, Prudence Issie Virtue, Faith Ann Works, Plymouth Rock Hichens, Welby Gosh, Coronation Cooley, Major Strain, Hiram Hooper, Eleazer Osborne, Orson Waggin, Lugubrious Blue, and Uri Nuther.*]

SQUIRE [*to Fitz*]:—Let me introduce to you the Widder—[*he stops.*]

[*Sarah has crowded the Widow back, and stands first in line.*]

[*The Squire resuming*]:—that is to say, Miss Saray Screecher, who, as our leadin' soprano, demands precedence— [*interrupted.*]

WIDOW [*crowding past Sarah*]:—Not of the Chairman of the Committee on Program, Squire.

SQUIRE [*bowing to her*]:—The Widder Wise.

FITZ [*bowing low*]:—I'm bleased to meet you. [*Turning to Sarah*]:—I haf been charmed mit Miss Screecher, yet, alretty.

WIDOW [*in tone of coy blandishment*]:—Oh, professor, so pleased to meet you!

FITZ:—Exgoose me, but I aind't a professor, but a moosical compositioner.

WIDOW [*Exuberantly apologetic*]:—Excuse *me!*

FITZ [*striking a Daniel Webster attitude, with his hand in the bosom of his coat*]:—I come from one of the oltest families.

WIDOW:—You don't look over 48.

FITZ:—Ach! I speak of my geological tree. Id iss a bamboo. Cain vas von of my fore-fadders. Dit your volks come offer in de May-flower, yet?

SQUIRE [*explanatory*]:—They came over a month later in the June-Bug.

FITZ [*loftily*]:—Von of my ant-cestors safed de life of de King of Veener-vorst at de Battle of Monte Carlo, and vas revorted by being mate a chentleman.

WIDOW:—What was he before that?

FITZ:—Before dat he vass only a grant-dook.

SARAH [*soulfully*]:—You have such a *be-autiful* accent, Herr Glockenspiel.

FITZ [*proudly*]:—I can trace my accent back to Villiam Tell—on my mudder's site.

[*Mercy presses forward.*]

SQUIRE:—This is Miss Mercy Toomy.

[*Fitz, bowing as Mercy court'cies.*] [*She moves on toward right of stage, and Jerusha presses forward.*]

Mrs. Jerusha Jane Cooley, wife of our esteemed townsman, Coronation Cooley.

[*She shakes hands with Fitz, and passes right.*]

This is Miss Henrietta Homleigh.

[*Fitz bows; Henrietta court'cies and passes right.*]

SQUIRE [*continuing*]:—Miss Prudence Issie Virtue, daughter of our able Constable, the Hon. Nary A. Virtue.

[*She shakes hands with Fitz and passes right.*]

Miss Faith Ann Works.

[*Fitz bows; Faith court'cies and passes right.*]

Mr. Plymouth Rock Hichens.